

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****A METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CENTRALIZED STORING AND  
RETRIEVING USER PASSWORD USING LDAP**

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A method for central storage and retrieval of user passwords in a computer network is provided. The method comprises entering network user ID and password information into a central database, and registering each network application and its associated password with a LDAP server. When user ID and password data is received from an application login, the data is encrypted and sent to a secure layer to identify the register application. The data is then sent to the LDAP server where the user password is decrypted and the application's associated password is retrieved. The supplied password is then authenticated and a response is sent from the LDAP server back to the application indicating whether or not the authentication has been verified. Access to the application is granted only if the authentication is indeed verified.

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